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Right of Municipal Officer to Collect on Assigned Contract.—The Supreme Court of Arkansas, in *People's Saving Bank v. Big Rock Stone & Construction Co.*, 99 Southwestern Reporter, 836, takes the position that a bank of which the mayor of a city is a stockholder and president cannot collect on an assigned claim for work done under a contract with the city, where the work was not approved when the assignment to the bank was made, and the officers of the city are by statute prohibited from being interested in contracts with the city.

Shipowner's Liability for Violating Regulations in Carrying Refugees.—A case of particular "human" interest is that of *The Charles Nelson*, 149 Federal Reporter, 146, recently decided by the United States District Court for the Northern District of Washington. In this case it appeared that a vessel leaving San Francisco at the time of the earthquake had, without any fault of the officers thereof, taken on board more than the legal number of passengers allowed. Libel was filed against the vessel to recover the statutory penalty, but the court dismissed the libel, using the following language: "It is the opinion of the court, however, that the extraordinary conditions existing at San Francisco when the voyage was undertaken justify and require the exercise of judicial discretion, and that according to principles of equity the libellants are not entitled to prevail. * * * It is p'ainly apparent that the desire of libellants to get away from San Francisco was too strong to admit of any questioning of the sufficiency of the accommodations afforded by the *Charles Nelson* before going aboard of her, and their demands are as ungracious as would be the case if they had been castaways and were suing the rescuing ship which had brought them away from a desolate shore."

Defamation—Printing Report of Ghost Haunting Premises.—The reckless publication of a report as to premises being haunted by a ghost raises a presumption of malice sufficient to support an action for damages for depreciation in the value of the property, loss and rent and expenses incurred in consequence of such publication. *Barrett v. Associated Newspapers*, 23 Times L. R. 666, distinguished in *Manitoba Free Press Co. v. Nagy*.

Validity of Building Ordinance Relating to Gas Reservoirs.—In *State v. Withnell*, 110 Northwestern Reporter, 680, it was contended that an ordinance requiring the written consent of all the property owners within a radius of one thousand feet, before a gas reservoir could be erected, was unconstitutional, because it was or might become prohibitory on account of the difficulty or impossibility of procuring unanimous consent of all the property owners in any locality, and because it assumed to confer on individual property owners within